

# WEEKLY BULLETIN



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Published Weekly. Subscription Price 50c per year. (Non-members \$1.00) 10 cents per copy.

EDITOR—TALMAGE C. HUGHES

120 Madison Avenue, Detroit 26, Michigan

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Volume 19

DETROIT, MICHIGAN, DECEMBER 4, 1945

Number 49

## THE BUILDING MATERIALS SITUATION

BY EDWIN J. BRUNNER, SECRETARY BUILDERS AND TRADERS EXCHANGE OF DETROIT

*A Talk Before The Michigan Construction Industry Council, in Lansing, Sept. 18, 1945*

The general picture in building materials is that at the present time the demand exceeds the supply. Therefore it follows that any building that the State of Michigan would do at the present moment would increase the burden on that market. The same thing may be said for a certain amount of private construction. If we could confine private construction to the very urgent and cut out the other for a while, we could proceed more orderly. But we cannot do that.

If price and other controls were suddenly cut off, there could well be a rising market in building materials and a rising construction cost, which would automatically cut down on the market. From 1919 to 1920 after the last war, construction costs rose to 160 per cent of 1913 costs, and everything fell off rather disastrously.

I would like to take a few examples of materials that are short and try to show what might have caused the shortage. The shortage of brick came about because, when the war controls were put on and wages were frozen, the wages of brick makers were frozen at their 1942 levels. That level was quite low at the time, and the freezing had the effect of pulling men from those plants into war industry. The customary large brick inventory has been eaten up by large wartime demands. Consequently, those yards have to start at scratch to produce for these new jobs. A lot of yards were closed down absolutely; now they are opening. Right after VJ Day they could raise the wages of their men, if the wage raise did not raise the price. The promised 10 per cent rise in brick prices will help the situation in brick immensely, and perhaps the plants can be in full operation by April 1, 1946.

The picture in lumber is practically the same as brick, except for the fact that the lumber industry had to keep going during the war to meet the unprecedented needs.

With reference to plumbing fixtures, most of the companies are now reconverting their plants, but a lot of their men are in the Army. Some of the new people coming into the industry don't like it, and they walk out. So you have a zone of floating labor, and the plants are not able to spring into full-time production in one day.

The same is true in the case of builders' hardware; there is a sort of floating em-

ployment. It is a specialized process. The manufacturers are probably at this time concentrating on the manufacture of about 3000 items out of a total of 30,000 items which they manufacture in normal times. Builders' hardware may be a bottleneck for some time to come.

Many things will have a bearing on whether or not producers will be able to get their stuff to you more quickly. What will be the policy of the armed services in letting men come back? Freedom from strikes and unrest will be another factor.

The material situation would seem to indicate that, if possible, the state should commence only those operations for the most urgently needed buildings. I am talking about building rather than road construction, because I think for roads you can get enough cement to go ahead. Then I think it would be a good idea if, say, in four months we reappraise this situation and at future intervals. The construction industry is very appreciative of this invitation from the Governor of the State of Michigan to come here and lay out our problems on the table.

I might make a humble suggestion that perhaps the State can go one step farther. Possibly the State could find or furnish some analysts who would help keep the records of supply and demand in the construction industry. You do it now for manufacturers and on the manpower situation.

O'DELL, HEWLETT & LUCKENBACH, had been selected as architects for the 1946 Ideal Home to be built as a feature of the Detroit Builders Show, but, owing to the inability of obtaining materials for the kind of house that was contemplated, this project has been postponed and a smaller house will be built, for which that firm will not be the architects.

### Producers' Meeting

Producers' Council of Michigan opened its season with a dinner meeting at the Wardell Sheraton Tuesday evening, Nov. 6. A social hour preceded the event.

President R. B. Richardson of Spencer Turbine Co. presided, with a program that was mostly educational and entertaining. Floyd Clise of Johns-Manville Sales Corp. is chairman of the program committee. Music was provided by Connie Walker and her accordion, with much good fellowship and group singing.

Sam Knowlton of Aluminum Co. of America was at the controls of the sound picture machine, with four interesting films: "Songfest," "Snow Fun," and "Sport Spellbinder." There was also a picture showing the building of portable docks that were towed across the English Channel for the Allied landings in Normandy. Bill Cory provided good fun with his own poems, for which he has become famous.

Clair W. Ditchy, FAIA, president of the Detroit Chapter, A.I.A., responded to the chairman request by saying that such meetings had become most interesting and entertaining and that he couldn't imagine why more architects do not take advantage of them. Architects were well represented, however, in the attendance of over one hundred. He characterized the meeting as a very wholesome experience, indeed.

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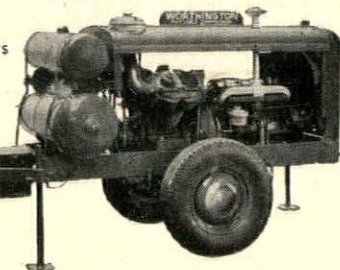
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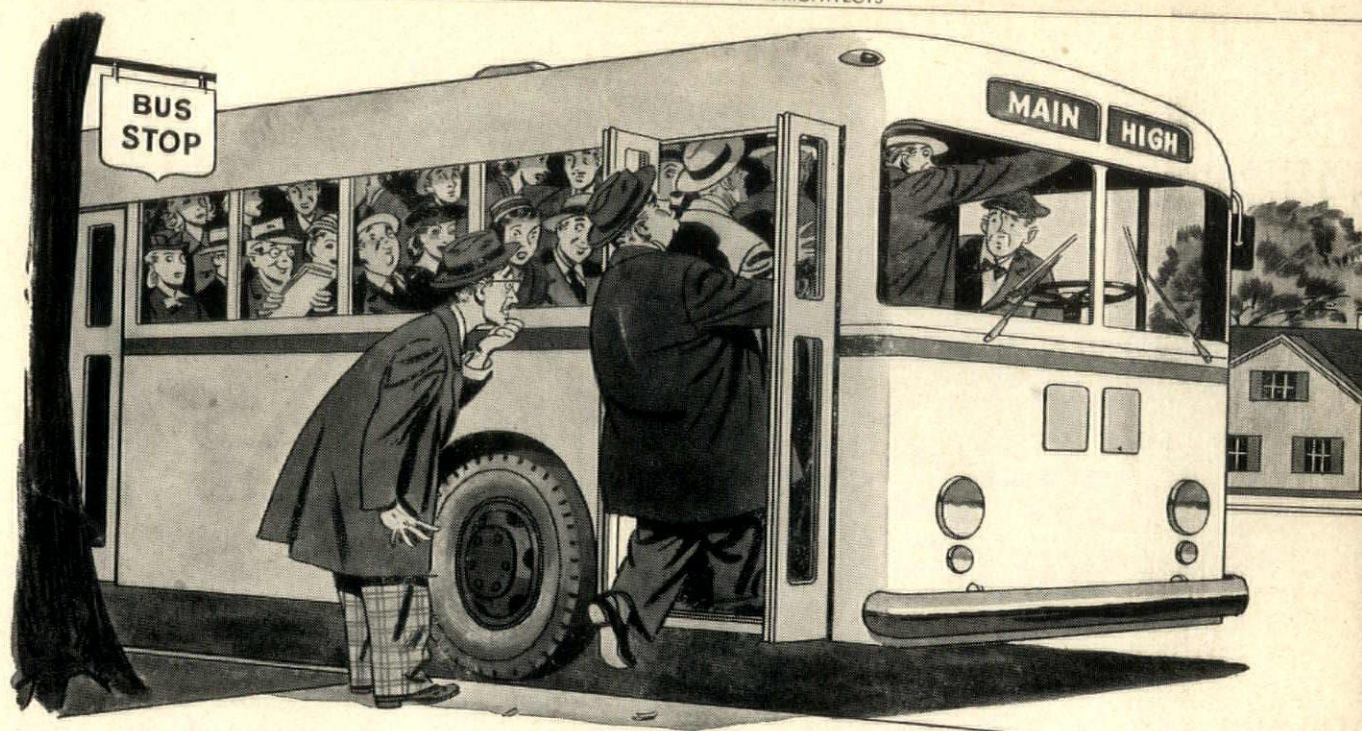
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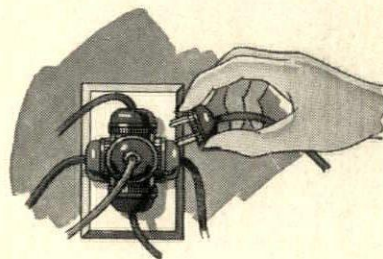
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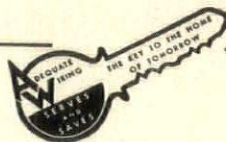


# THERE ISN'T ALWAYS ROOM FOR ONE MORE

DAD found this out when he tried to flag a bus during yesterday evening's rush hour. Mother discovered the same thing when she plugged in her electric waffle iron, and blew a fuse. And Junior has noticed that his electric train won't pull as many cars when Sis is ironing. No, there isn't always room for one more, particularly when it comes to adding new and wonderful electrical appliances to an obsolete house-wiring system. With adequate wiring you can be assured of having all the household joys that electricity can offer any home—even a brand-new one! Adequate wiring now is your guarantee of tomorrow's better living—electrically.



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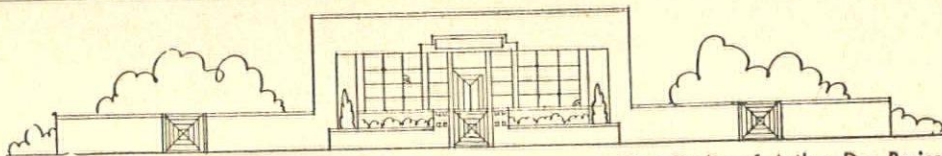
## Grand Rapids Chapter

Members of the Grand Rapids Chapter, was held on Monday evening, Dec. 1, in the Green Room of the Park American Hotel, Kalamazoo. Dinner was served at 6:00 p.m. Randall Wagner was chairman of the committee on arrangements and was presided over by William A. Stone and James H. Allen.

### Allen, reporting in Architectonics—

JUL E. FLANAGAN, former secretary of the Chapter and also and even more important, formerly T-3 in a photo intelligence group attached to the 42nd Division, is again a civilian. Paul entered the service on January 7th, 1943, ("It does not seem like just yesterday") and served in France, Normandy and Germany. He is making what he describes as a refresher course in (a) architecture and (b) how to be a civilian. Course A is in the refined surroundings of the offices of the Mighty Architectural Associates ("Throw your money over the transom and we will get you later, possibly"), where he is taking Course B is quite a question indeed, we can't prove it. Paul was always a working chapter member and we will all be very happy to have him back.

NEST KING, who until recently was warrant officer, designing airport buildings for the Air Transport Command at Kalamazoo, is also in the editor's office, along with Warren Rindge and the editor are asking him to sign up as a Chapter member.



New Studio of Arthur Des Rosiers

THE EDITOR, overcome with modest pride in the unprecedented achievement of signing up two good men before King-scott landed them, said today quote this joint is getting so full of service men I am thinking of renaming it the Campau Square Veterans Facility end of quotation.

CARL J. RUDINE, Chapter member on leave with the Navy, has been promoted to Lieutenant Commander in the Naval Reserve Force. He is still commanding LST 821 out in the Pacific but hopes to get out soon. The sooner the better, say we all.

ANYBODY who had never edited an architectural publication before would naturally expect chapter members to send in news, bits of wildly comical comment, tabulations of building costs, and so on, but the Editor is not a green beginner at this stuff and he does not expect anything of the sort. Statistics prove that it requires almost more than deadly provocation to induce an architect to write a letter about anything to an architectural publication unless he gets mad about something the editor did or did not say. Now all I have to do is figure out how to get you all mad about something. Don't prompt, please; it will come to me.

ARTHUR DES ROSIER, A.I.A., announces the removal of his offices from the Maccabees Building to his own building at 15850 James Couzens Highway, Detroit 21, Mich. The new telephone number is University 4-2500.

## Planning Group Hears Architect

Prof. George B. Brigham, A.I.A., was the speaker at the Home Planning institute in Grand Rapids, Oct. 30. He spoke on Contractors and Construction.

Prof. Brigham is associate professor of architecture at the University of Michigan and previously associated with Tufts in the college of engineering, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and California Institute of Technology. He was an architect in Pasadena and an architectural designer in Boston.

Registration to date for the Home Planning institute has reached 1,110. Evening classes are attended by 900 who are interested in building homes, while the afternoon classes draw around 200.

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## Promotions in U. D. Faculty

C. J. Freund, Dean of the College of Engineering at the University of Detroit, recently announced several promotions in rank in the faculty which were effective September 1st of this year.

L. R. Blakeslee, A.I.A., Associate Professor of Architectural Engineering has been appointed Director of that Department. Professor Blakeslee graduated from the University of Michigan in 1928 and obtained his degree of Master in Architecture from that institution in 1938. He joined the faculty at the University of Detroit in 1928, was promoted to Associate Professor in 1943 and became Acting Director of Architectural Engineering in 1942. He is a registered Architect in the State of Michigan and is past President of the Detroit Division Michigan Society of Architects.

T. C. Hanson, Acting Director of the Department of Civil Engineering since 1943, has been appointed Director of the Department. Graduating from Purdue University in 1930, Professor Hanson obtained his master's degree at the University of Michigan in 1934. He joined the faculty at the University of Detroit in 1930, became Assistant Professor in 1937 and Associate Professor in 1943. He is a registered Professional Engineer in the States of Michigan and Indiana.

George H. Tweney, Instructor in Aeronautical Engineering and Acting Director of the Department since 1942, has been promoted to Assistant Professor. Professor Tweney graduated in Aeronautical Engineering at the University of Detroit in 1938 and obtained his master's degree at the University of Michigan in 1942. Prior to joining the faculty at the University in 1941, Professor Tweney was a Flight-test Engineer for the Atlantic Division of Pan American Airways. He is a registered Professional Engineer in the State of Michigan and has done considerable research work for Bendix Aviation Corporation, Beech Aircraft Corporation, The Glenn Martin Company and others.

Anthony S. Satullo, Instructor in Electrical Engineering since 1940, has been promoted to Assistant Professor. Having graduated in Electrical Engineering from the Case School of Applied Science in 1938, he received his Master's degree from the same institution in 1940. A registered Professional Engineer in the State of Ohio, he has done considerable research work for Hickok Electrical Instrument Company of Cleveland and the Power Equipment Company of Detroit. His particular field is Electronics.

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## Architects' Civic Design Group of Metropolitan Detroit

**BRANSON V. GAMBER, Chairman**

At no time within recent years has the architectural profession been so busy as it is now, or beset by so many difficulties. In spite of this, a number of architects in the Detroit area have been interested in pursuing a research study of the overall plan of the metropolitan area of Detroit as it could be some years hence.

This group includes and invites architects who are not satisfied with conditions as they are, but who have the vision to conceive and plan for a better future environment. They recognize the benefit which is derived from working under the inspiring and stimulating direction of the master architect and planner, Eliel Saarinen.

While this work is largely educational in its scope and purpose, we are confident that the results of this undertaking will prove of value to the officials of Detroit and the surrounding cities and towns.

Most of the members of the A.C.D. Group have arrived at the third stage of the work, the preparation of models of their respective areas. Some members have been working on these models at Cranbrook on Saturdays, and a certain amount of progress has been made. However, it is urgently necessary that a greater number should engage in this work.

A general meeting of the A.C.D. Group was held recently at Cranbrook for the purpose of reviewing the work done, and to encourage other members to proceed with this important and fascinating phase of the study. At this meeting detailed plans for a forthcoming special meeting were discussed and arranged.

About January 15, 1946 a special meeting will be held at Cranbrook, to which repre-

sentatives of a number of civic groups will be invited. It is expected that such a meeting will produce helpful and fruitful discussion.

In order to make such a meeting effective, and productive of the best results, it is essential that considerably more work be done by our members to advance the studies by that time.

Although recognizing all the difficulties and handicaps which the present situation of the architects imposes, we urgently request that you arrange a program which will permit you to devote some of your time to this work. It is an opportunity which may never come again, to prepare ourselves for a field in which the architect will exercise an important function.

## Alfred J. Seeler

Alfred Julius Seeler, architect, 70, died at his home, 200 N. Kenwood, Royal Oak, Mich., on Nov. 20.

Born in Germany, July 11, 1875, he was educated in German technical universities, following which he began his architectural practice there in 1893. He came to America in 1902, later locating in Detroit, where he became registered to practice in 1916. He maintained his practice here until 1935, when ill health forced him to retire. He had specialized in the field of theatres.

His wife, Cecelia, and three sons, Richard H., Frank J., and Alfred J. Jr., of the AAF, survive.

Mr. Seeler had been a member of the Michigan Society of Architects.

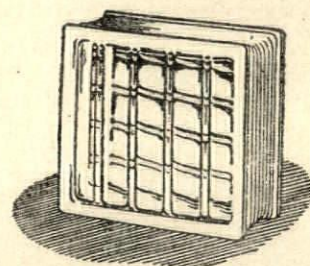
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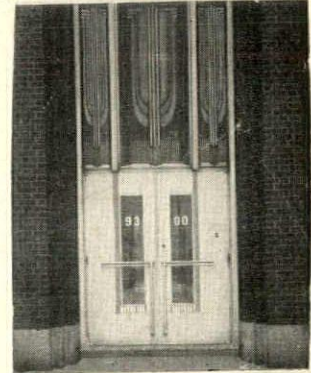
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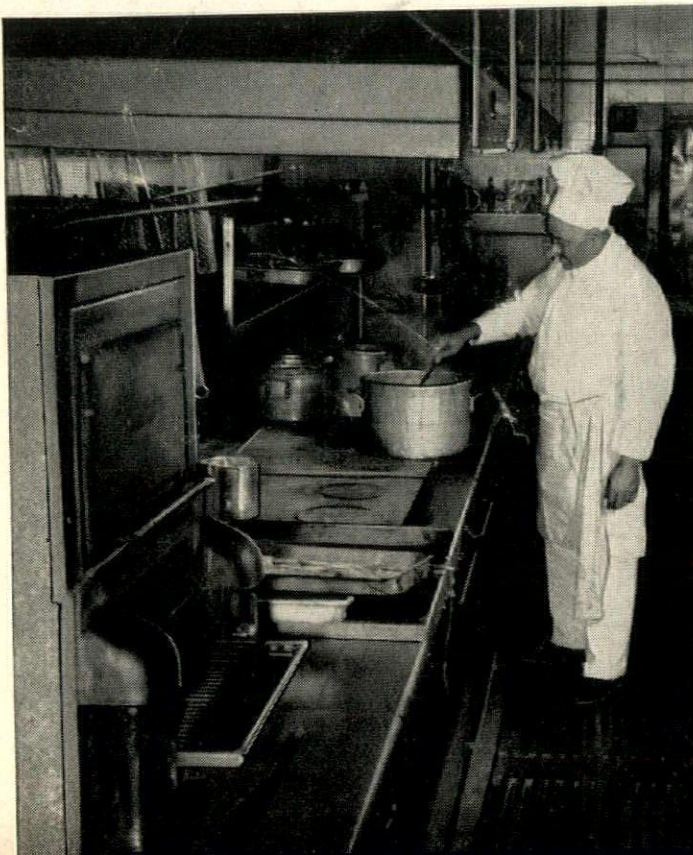
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Published Weekly. Subscription Price 50c per year. (Non-members \$1.00) 10 cents per copy.

EDITOR—TALMAGE C. HUGHES

120 Madison Avenue, Detroit 26, Michigan

E. B. FAUQUIER—ADVERTISING MANAGER

Volume 19

DETROIT, MICHIGAN, DECEMBER 11, 1945

Number 50

## STATE BUILDING PROGRAM

By A. N. LANGIUS, Director

Buildings and Construction Division, Michigan State Administrative Board

**A**T THE PRESENT TIME the State has \$20 million available for its building program. While this is only a small part of the total required program, it represents the total building appropriations of the last two Legislatures.

When Governor Kelly was elected in 1943, his first order to us was for an inventory of the State's facilities. Until that time we had no adequate conception of the size or condition of our physical plant, how it was being

used, or the age, facilities, and capacities of most of the buildings. This inventory, completed after many months of work, revealed that the State owned some 1,200 buildings with a physical worth of nearly a half billion dollars. In addition to these facts the inventory produced a great deal more. It showed a serious deficiency in physical facilities, focused attention on many fire hazards in State institutions, and revealed a need for about \$60 million of new construction of which one million dollars would be required for planning.

As a result, the Legislature appropriated \$10 million toward the preparation and development of the required State building program. The State Administrative Board immediately appointed architects and engineers and we began the development of site studies and plans for a \$60 million program. At present we have 35 firms working on plans for State projects.

After the architects began the preparation of plans, it became apparent that \$60 million program was inadequate. The original building program was based on 1940 costs but by 1945 we realized that the original program must be increased to approximately \$83 million because of higher construction costs. The addition of items that many of our institutions required for the proper

equipment of buildings raised the total cost of our program to nearly \$131 million.

Our building and maintenance program has not been adequate. The \$20 million now available will not do the job required for the State, because of the fact that, while the State has increased 40 per cent in population from 1923-1944, our average construction from 1933-1944 was 64 per cent below the average of the previous ten year period.

Of the \$20 million now available, about \$8 million are for the elimination of fire hazards and urgent repairs and maintenance. We have \$1.5 million for fire-proof stairways, doors, and fire escapes; \$850,000 for additional water supplies; \$375,000 for the replacement of defective wiring; \$5,000,000 for general repairs and maintenance; \$2,400,000 for repairs to roofs; \$1,500,000 for mechanical repairs; and \$500,000 for improvements to sewage disposal systems and water supplies. There remain, then, only \$11,000,000 for new structures.

First on the list of needed structures is the Michigan Veterans' Facility for which \$1,200,000 has been appropriated to increase capacity to accommodate an additional 500 veterans. New hospital structures are badly

needed. The \$3,187,000 allocated for mental hospitals will provide only 1,000 beds, whereas the State Hospital Commission predicts the need to be for 10,000 beds in Michigan.

The balance of the appropriation \$5,333,000, goes to State educational institutions. This sum will give each institution one facility. That facility is not going to be auditoriums or gymnasiums, but badly needed classroom space. The extent of present educational building needs is indicated by the fact that, in the last 10 years the population of the ten State educational institutions has increased 60 per cent while the State during this period has spent less than \$1 million for buildings at these institutions.

**HUBERT W. VanDONGEN**, recently discharged from the Navy, has opened offices for the practice of architecture at 218 Fidelity building, St. Joseph, Mich. Before entering the service he had been employed concerns in Michigan Florida and Panama City. He spent 20 month in the Pacific Theatre of War. He graduated from the University of Michigan, and he also attended Armour Institute of Technology.

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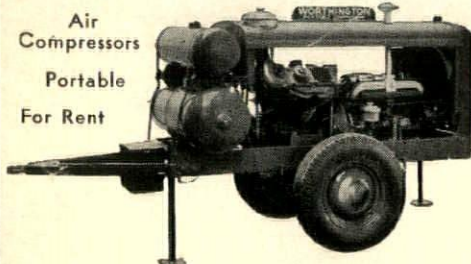
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## Detroit Chapter Hears Boase

Sixty-five members of the Detroit Chapter, A.I.A., heard Arthur Boase, of Portland Cement Association, speak on South American architecture, at the Chapter's regular monthly meeting in the Rackham Building, Wednesday evening, November 28.

Following Dinner, president Clair W. Ditchy presiding welcomed members and guests, among them Mr. Fred J. Herrick, A.I.A., of Albion, Mich., now in his 77th year, his son, Major D. F. Herrick, recently returned from Europe, where he served in the U. S. Engineering Corps., also the Major's son, corporal Herrick.

The president announced the sad news of the passing last Sunday of Frank C. Baldwin, F.A.I.A., distinguished architect, of Washington, D. C. Mr. Baldwin was an honorary member of the Detroit Chapter. He also reported the Board meeting, which preceded the dinner meeting, stating that new committees had been appointed and that notices of appointments would be sent in the near future. It was gratifying to hear that our fellow member, Wirt C. Rowland was improving in Jennings Hospital and was expected to return home in about two weeks. In the meantime he will welcome visits from his friends, during visiting hours.

Mr. Ditchy read a communication from the Wayne County Tuberculosis and Health Society, of 120 Madison Ave., Detroit 26, Mich., requesting financial support. The president stated that this is a most worthy cause and urged members to send contributions direct to the Society.

Mr. Boase gave a most interesting and instructive talk, including detailed and technical accounts, illustrated with slides, of the marked differences in reinforced concrete construction here and in South America. He showed pictures of R. C. buildings rising 24 to 36 stories, with concrete of thinness and steel on smallness which no United States engineer has dared to use.

"I don't pretend to understand it," he admitted, "but when they show you buildings so constructed that have stood for 20 years or more without showing a crack, you've got to give them credit for knowing something."

## Welch to Speak

Kenneth C. Welch, AIA, will be the speaker at a meeting of the Illuminating Engineering Society, Michigan Section, in the Detroit Edison Company's Auditorium, 2000 Third Ave. at 7:30 p.m., Dec. 11. The meeting will be held jointly with the Retail Merchants Association, and Display Association.

Mr. Welch, vice-president of Grand Rapids Store Equipment Co., will take for his subject "Lighting and Brightness for Selling." Architects are invited to attend.



Welch

War's end brings commercial lighting to the front with a rush. Forced to the background by the urgent requirements of war production, store and window lighting now takes the spotlight in retail merchandising. Mr. Welch has long been identified in the field of lighting and merchandising. His years of experience have culminated in a whole new approach to the important factor of Brightness and Display Window design will be revealed.

The important meeting provides an excellent opportunity to invite as your guests, those engaged in retail merchandising.

## New Offices

E. HARRY MAGNUSON, architect, announces the opening of his office for the general practice of architecture at 202 Montgomery building, Muskegon, Mich. He desires manufacturers' catalogues.

Prior to entering private practice he was employed by such firms as Graham, Anderson, Probst & White; Howard Van Doren Shaw, Russ & Harrison, Anderson & Tichnor, and many others.

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## Photos & Biogs

In 1938 the Bulletin collected photographs and biographies of Michigan architects, for publication in the Society's Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Number. This information has been most useful, and while we do not intend to repeat such a roster in the near future, we are interested in bringing this material up to date. Accordingly, the same photographer, Mr. John S. Coburn, 517 Charlevoix Bldg., Detroit, (Tel. CH. 2836), who assisted at that time is able to serve on the same basis - \$1.50 per sitting, and for this he will deliver one glossy print to the Bulletin and one to the architect. If your office is in the downtown area he will go to you, otherwise you must go to his office, in which case an appointment will be necessary. The photographs we have are several years old. We would like to have late ones of those included in the Silver Anniversary Number. The younger men, who have become registered since that time, should also cooperate by furnishing their pictures and biographical sketches.

FRANK A. MILES announces the resumption of his architectural practice at 50 Cambridge Road, Grosse Pointe Farms, Mich.

WARREN FIBRE PRODUCTS CO., announce the removal of its offices and insulation division to 14290 Meyers Road, Detroit 27, Tel. HOgarth 5675.

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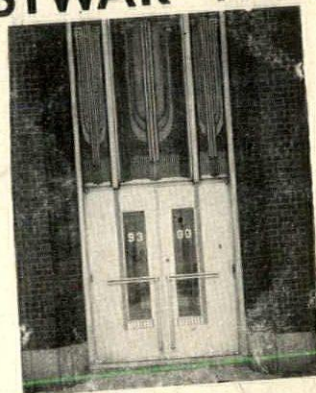
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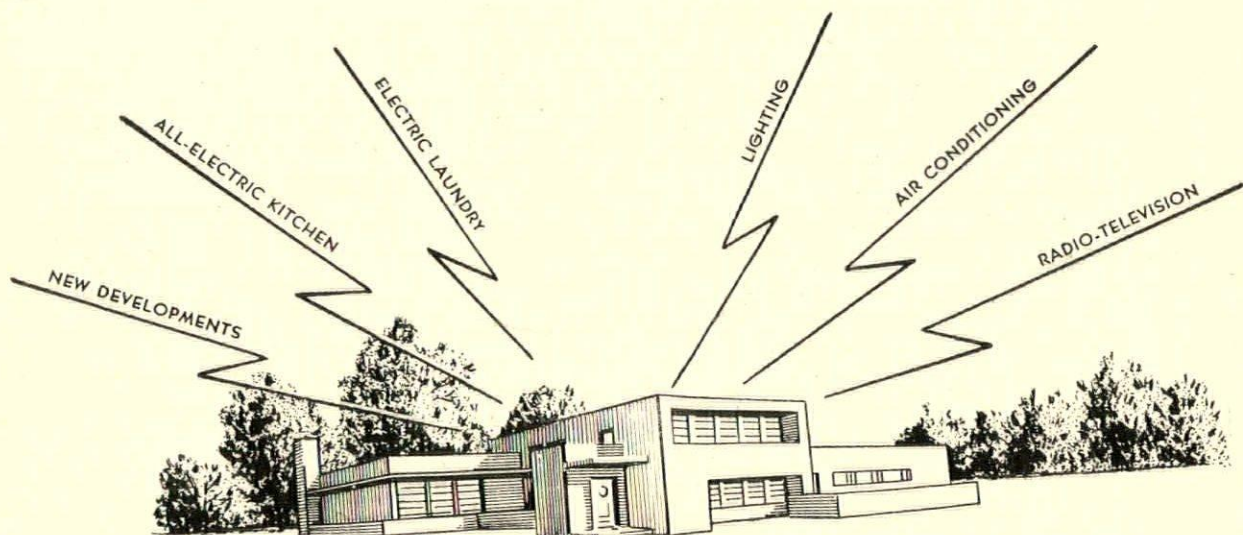
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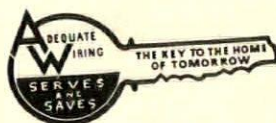
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Published Weekly. Subscription Price 50c per year. (Non-members \$1.00) 10 cents per copy.

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120 Madison Avenue, Detroit 26, Michigan

E. B. FAUQUIER—ADVERTISING MANAGER

Volume 19

DETROIT, MICHIGAN, DECEMBER 18, 1945

Number 51

## Comments On Temporary War Housing In Detroit

(Editor's Note: The following article by Chas. B. McGrew, AIA, is reprinted (with some modifications by the author) from the Eight Annual Report of the Detroit Housing Commission.)

**T**HE 5,245 dwelling units of temporary emergency war housing built in Detroit may be classified according to the type of construction, as follows: (1) Prefabricated, (2) Partially Prefabricated, or Panelized, and (3) site-fabricated in the Traditional manner. Each embodies some shop fabrication and some site fabrication, the classification only indicating the degree of each. Consideration as to their relative merits involves the factors of speed in construction, economy of materials, cost of maintenance and facility of removal.

1. *Prefabricated.* Five hundred seventy-four prefabricated mobile (trailer type) units, wholly manufactured by mass production line methods and almost entirely shop-assembled, have been trucked from the plants to Detroit sites and erected on wood post foundations.

These houses have a wood frame with exteriors finished with composition board, wood roof sheathing, interior walls and ceilings of composition wall board, linoleum floors, oil-burning space heaters and kitchen ranges, ice refrigerators, and three-fixture (closet, lavatory and shower) bathrooms. All were shop painted throughout. The average per-dwelling unit costs erected was approximately \$2,445.00, utilities and other site improvements not included.

The principal advantages of this type are mobility and rapidity of erection. Shop fabrication can be carried on simultaneously with site work and as the latter is finished, the practically completed house can be delivered, erected and utility connections completed within a few days. Their speed of completion was demonstrated by a 285-unit addition to Robert Brooks Homes which was ready for occupancy within 40 days after start of work at the site. We have not dismantled, moved and re-erected one of these homes, but it is not believed that this would be a difficult or costly operation.

We have had considerable trouble with these buildings. About 200 units have had extensive roof repairs and 137 others have been completely re-roofed; the exterior composition board becomes wavy and large "blisters" develop which concerns tenants and invites further damage by children and vandals; the interior wall board has a tendency to shrink, buckle and become wavy; etc. Consequently the cost of maintenance has made this type by far the most costly to operate.

2. *Partially Prefabricated or Panelized,* units, numbering 2,328 have been erected in Detroit. The size of the shop-produced sections varies with the manufacturer, as do the materials and the technique of assembly.

These houses have been quite satisfactory. They have wood frames covered on the outside with exterior-type plywood or wood siding, interior walls and ceilings of composition or gypsum wall board, plywood or strip pre-finished wood floors with or without wood sub-floors, flat built-up or pitched asphalt-shingled roofs, coal-fired space heaters, coal or gas-fired kitchen ranges, ice refrigerators, and three-fixture baths. The average cost per dwelling unit, utilities and other site improvements not included, is approximately \$2,403.00.

Maintenance difficulties have also been experienced with these partially prefabricated units. The asbestos-cement board aprons used on some projects to close the opening around the building between the floor construction and the grade are too easily broken and extensive replacement at considerable cost has been necessary. (Piping freezes unless the space under the buildings is effectively enclosed.) Interior composition board walls and ceilings buckle and warp considerably, necessitating frequent and extensive repairs.

For various reasons, delivery of completed units of this classification was not as rapid as anticipated. Delays resulted because the larger prefabricated sections were quite difficult to handle and distribute around muddy sites, certain prefabricated sections were not delivered in such sequence that the assembly of the buildings could be promptly completed as the construction crews moved down the site, and other reasons peculiar to this type of fabrication. Such delays were not so serious

on the traditionally-built projects where only the handling, distribution and erection of unassembled framing lumber and other small items was involved. It is not believed that partially prefabricated dwellings were erected here more quickly on the average than similar traditionally-constructed buildings.

Our experience indicated that the advantages of this mixture of factory and field fabrication about balanced the disadvantages on the projects built in Detroit.

3. *Traditionally-constructed* houses, totaling 2,187, have been erected here.

Specifications: Wood wall and roof framing; exteriors, gypsum board or 2" cement-asbestos finished insulating sheathing; roofs, pitched and covered with asphalt roll roofing; interior walls and ceilings, gypsum board; coal-fired space heaters; coal or gas-fired kitchen ranges; ice refrigerators; and the standard three-fixture bathroom. The average per dwelling unit cost, without utilities and site improvements, was approximately \$2,223.00.

As the contractors usually elected to do some of the grading, road construction, utility installation and certain other site improvement work before making a real start on the house construction, extra speedy delivery of completed ready-to-occupy homes was not anticipated. Delivery was, however, about as expected.

These dwellings have been generally very satisfactory except for the exterior gypsum siding. The outside paper covering comes loose from the gypsum during winter and damp weather and hangs sloppily to the wall. Children have created some damage by ripping off this loose paper, thus exposing spots of bare gypsum, which cannot be successfully spot painted. Repainting the entire building appears to be the only

(See WAR HOUSING—PAGE 3)



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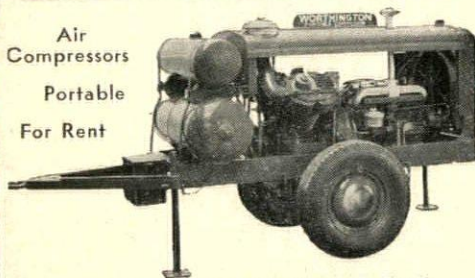
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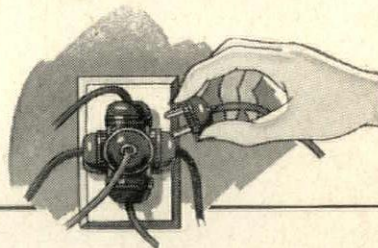
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**CLAIR W. DITCHY, F.A.I.A.** was the principal speaker at the Friday morning session of the Ninth Annual Meeting of the Michigan Association of Public Schools Business Officials. The meeting took place at Dearborn Inn, Dearborn, Michigan on December 6, 7, and 8.

Ditchy's address was on the subject of "Trends in School Building Construction" and touched upon modern tendencies in planning as well as current developments in new materials and equipment. He stated that there were no "miracles" materials to solve the problem of mounting costs and that most improvements would be refinements in present materials and equipment.

Among the architects who attended the session were Eberle Smith, Louis P. King-scott, Carl Jensen and Paul Kasurin.

**State Board of Registration**

The Michigan State Board of Registration for Architects, Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors announces the next examination for Architects, Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors will be given at

the University of Detroit, Michigan State College and Michigan College of Mining on January 3rd, 4th and 5th.

The subject of the Design Problem for the Architectural Examination will be "A Memorial Recreation Center for a Small Community."

Application blanks and full information may be obtained by writing to the office of the Board, 307 Transportation Bldg., Detroit (26).

**EDWARD A. SCHILLING, A. I. A.,** is confined to Harper Hospital, following a major operation. While he is progressing satisfactorily, and expects to be discharged in about another week, he would be glad to see his friends, during visiting hours.

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**War Housing—Con't. from Page 1**

way to satisfactorily restore its appearance but this is too expensive an operation to repeat frequently. During the summer this loose paper dries out taut and smooth and one would never know that it had been loose.

Comments relative to the maintenance of cement-asbestos skirtings and frozen pipes under (2) above are applicable also to traditionally-built houses.

We have had little experience with the cement-asbestos insulating sheathing as the projects where it has been used to have just been recently completed. It takes paint well on the inside and insulates effectively but the pieces adjacent to space heaters have warped and cracked badly.

Of particular interest is Project Mich-20188, composed of partially prefabricated demountable buildings, which were originally erected (but never occupied) near LaPorte, Indiana. One hundred fifty-six units were dismantled, trucked to Detroit and re-erected. In the writer's opinion, these may prove to be the most serviceable of our temporary war houses.

These buildings have wood frames on cinder-block piers, exteriors of exterior-type plywood, pitched asphalt-shingled roofs, interior walls and ceilings of stained and waxed plywood, strip pre-finished wood floors, coal-fired space heaters or forced warm-air furnaces, gas-fired kitchen ranges, ice refrigerators and three fixture baths. The rooms are large, well-lighted and serviceably finished. Their original cost is not known, but it appears that \$2,700.00 is a reasonable estimate. The cost of taking them down, transportation to Detroit, re-erection and a complete one-coat exterior paint job, was approximately \$1,508.00. This indicates the value of demountable design.

All projects with the exception of one, are built on leased sites which are to revert to their pre-war vacant status after the termination of the lease.

It is believed that the quality of Detroit's emergency war housing is appropriate for its anticipated life-expectancy. Had it been better built, maintenance would have been less and the period of its usefulness would have been lengthened. However, this could not have been accomplished without using critical materials in greater quantities than were available.

Restrictions on materials imposed by the war necessitated frequent experimentation. Materials with long and successful experience records for many purposes were pressed into services for which they

were surely never intended, and in these cases they did not do so well. The new materials, so glamorously publicized for postwar building, were not extensively used. In the few cases where they were tried, the results were discouraging.

Occasionally articles appear about the war housing program being a great laboratory in which new materials, new construction techniques and advanced ideas for the postwar house have been created for the new postwar way of life. As a matter of fact, Detroit's war housing has only confirmed opinions concerning materials and techniques long held by the local building fraternity. Its contribution to the technical knowledge of the experienced architect adds up to just about nothing.

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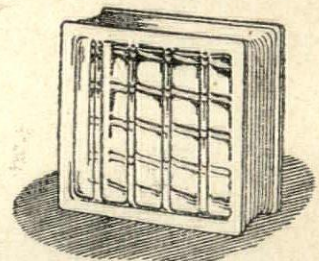
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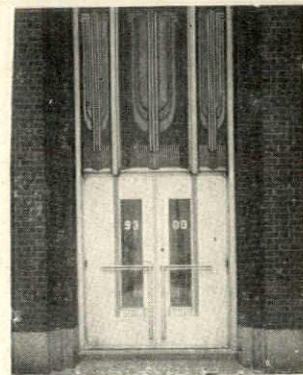
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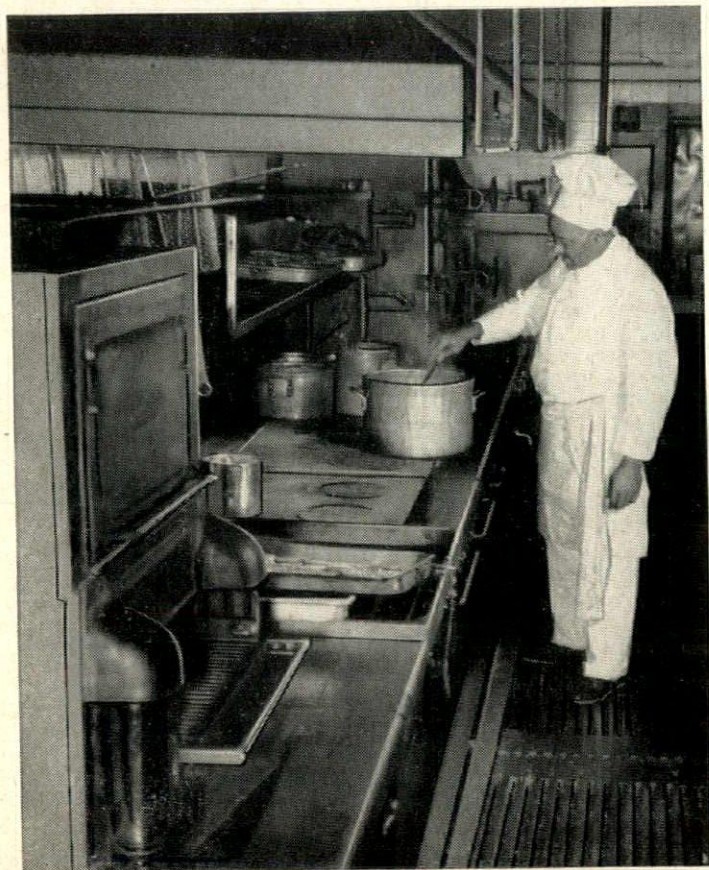
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Published Weekly. Subscription Price 50c per year. (Non-members \$1.00) 10 cents per copy.

EDITOR—TALMAGE C. HUGHES

120 Madison Avenue, Detroit 26, Michigan

E. B. FAUQUIER—ADVERTISING MANAGER

Volume 19

DETROIT, MICHIGAN, DECEMBER 25, 1945

Number 52

## THE DANGERS OF FEDERAL SUBSIDY

AS OUTLINED BY THOMAS S. HOLDEN

**C**ITIES SHOULD solve their own problems in the coming postwar construction program, Thomas S. Holden, president of F. W. Dodge Corporation, told a meeting of the Economic Club in Detroit's Book-Cadillac Hotel, on Dec. 10. Seated at the speakers' table, at the invitation of Allen B. Crow, Club president, were representatives of the architectural profession and other elements of the building industry.

Holden assailed the Wagner-Ellender-Taft General Housing Bill pending in the Senate as "another offer to local governments to barter their independence for Federal largesse."

"There is a likelihood," he declared, "that Federal subsidies will tend to peg depressed realty at artificially high prices and make urban re-development more costly than it should be."

He asserted that because of the war, New York's and Michigan's re-development laws have not had a fair test. He added that they "are not likely to function at their best until we reach a fairly stabilized postwar level of rents, land values and construction costs."

"Urban re-development has got to be worked out as a long-range program," he asserted. "There is absolutely no need for rushing through a Federal subsidy program on any ground of immediate urgency. There is ample time to give state laws an opportunity to function in a favorable economic climate."

The speaker called upon Detroit business and industry to take the initiative, if they want slum clearance problems solved upon the basis of free enterprise.

"I think a system whereby the Federal Government bribes the local government

to do what it patently should do in its own interest," he declared, "is unlikely to produce practical and economical plans and quite likely to produce abuses and extravagances."

"The construction industry probably is going to build more in the next 10 years than in any previous decade. Besides private building, there necessarily must be a large amount of public construction."

"I believe the country will be most satisfactorily served if its many public improvement projects are carried out according to normal, pre-depression patterns of Federal, state and local responsibility."

### Rollinson in New Location

James W. Rollinson, manufacturers' Representative, announces the removal of his offices to 1020 Hammond Building, Detroit 26. The new telephone number is RAndolph 0936. Rollinson, who had an architectural training, has been in business for himself, as manufacturers' representative, for the past 28 years. He has been calling on architects since 1910. The lines and companies he represents covers the field of aluminum windows, hollow metal doors, terra cotta, stone, granite, ornamental iron, etc.

### A. W. Esslinger

A. William Esslinger, A.I.A., president of Esslinger-Misch Co., of Detroit, died suddenly of a heart attack, at his home, in Royal Oak, on Dec. 18.

Mr. Esslinger was born in Frankfort, Ill., Feb. 4, 1888. He attended school in Milwaukee and Chicago, and later studied at Chicago's Art Institute. The family moved to Switzerland and he continued his studies at Burgdorf College, Winterture College and the University of Zurich. He subsequently traveled and studied in France, Germany and Italy, and worked in European architects' offices.

On returning to the United States in 1913, he became employed in the office of W.E.N. Hunter, architect, which connection was interrupted by his service in World War I. Upon his discharge he became a junior partner in the firm of W.E.N. Hunter Co.

In 1926 he became associated with The Otto Misch Co., general builders. The firm was reorganized under the name of The Esslinger-Misch Co.



Holden



Esslinger

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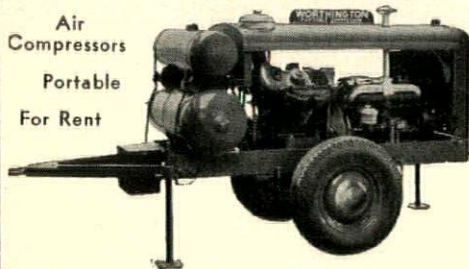
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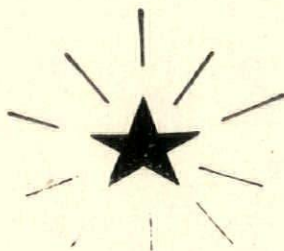
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and  
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plete reports from thirty-four other cities show approximately \$3,000,000 of construction in the same category.

An important factor in determining the volume of local public works construction which could be started immediately is the amount of funds now on hand for construction.

Two surveys of cities submitting over 50% of the applications on file with the Planning Commission show few cities with reserves of any amount earmarked for construction. Very little financial planning was reported for projects to be financed by general obligation, special assessment, or revenue bonds and any estimate as to the amount of construction to be financed by bond issues during the next year would be pure guesswork.

Over \$30,000,000 was reported as available and earmarked for construction with the major portion reported by Detroit.

The construction program as reported which could be started immediately if entirely dependent on local financing is negligible in total except in Detroit, Lansing, and Kalamazoo and could not cope with an unemployment problem of more than a few months duration. A majority of the smaller non-fifteen mill cities have reserves and bonding ability to finance an expanded construction program for perhaps a year. In general, the fifteen-mill cities report they are entirely dependent on bond issues and have very few projects for which a contract could be let immediately.

To summarize, plans and specifications will be ready by Jan. 1, 1946 for approximately \$100,000,000 of construction, and possibly \$30,000,000 of construction could be financed locally from reserves. The volume of local public construction immediately ahead in Michigan can not be estimated until local officials have information regarding future construction costs, the availability of materials and skilled labor, the need for an expanded public works program, and have some indication from Congress of policy regarding federal aid for local construction.

## College Professional Training In Architecture

*From ARCHITECTURE.*

*A PROFESSION AND A CAREER.*

*Published by*

*The American Institute of Architects.*

**WELLS I. BENNETT, A.I.A.**

**President, Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, Dean, College of Architecture, University of Michigan. (Ed.)**

Preparation for a career in architecture today almost invariably includes training in an architectural school. A little less than eighty years ago the first school of architecture was established in the United States, and others soon followed. For a considerable period thereafter the young man proposing to take up architecture as a profession made a choice as to whether he would attend an architectural school or enter a well established office, usually as office boy, for an apprenticeship of several years under the architect of his choice. During the last few decades, however, the curriculum of the recognized architectural

school has been the generally accepted approach to the profession.

The architectural school endeavors to instruct the student in the principles of his profession. Leaving experience and specialization to the post-college years, it reflects nevertheless quite accurately certain characteristics of modern architectural practice. The demands made upon the architect today are immensely greater than those of even fifty years ago. Rapid industrialization and urbanization of the country, expressed architecturally in new types of buildings, new forms in plan organization, and changing techniques of building, have increased the responsibility of the architect.

While the architect has always been held accountable for public health and safety as regards building, he is also increasingly responsible in a business sense. Whether the client is an individual, a school board, a corporation, or a government agency, there is a definite insistence on economic value in any building project. Modern practice calls for both an intensification and a broadening of architectural education.

To be worth his salt, the young man entering an office after college must offer his employer facility in handling the tools of a workman in the architectural profession. These tools are:

**Draftsmanship**—That is, the ability to express three-dimensional ideas by means of working drawings, presentation drawings, and models.

**Knowledge of modern construction**—In order to make intelligible drawings, a working knowledge of the basic principles and procedures in wood, steel, and reinforced concrete as essential.

**Acquaintance with materials**—To the old-time building materials used traditionally, modern invention and technology have added new materials and modified techniques. The young man must know something of them.

**Architectural design**—There must be a knowledge of architectural design as plan and space use.

Training in handling the tools just mentioned, while time-consuming and exacting, is the easiest part of architectural education. More novices can obtain passable or even superior skill as draftsmen, than can finally measure up to the full status of architect. What one does with good draftsmanship, formulae for steel and concrete, principles of design, and modern materials proves the professional worth of the man. Facility suffices for a draftsman; but creative and organizational ability, together with professional integrity, are required of the architect.

The architectural schools have in common a pattern of training. This features particularly two aspects of architecture—design and construction.

The study of architectural design, beginning with varying approaches as to what constitute its elements, goes on to simple planning. This training in, and consciousness of, architecture as three-dimensional organization of space, proceeds through the college years to the consideration of

rather complex plan organization. It may finally extend to city planning.

Mathematics, physics, and mechanics lead to structural design, the study of properties of materials, and the general consideration of mechanical equipment. Our professional schools increasingly feature the integration of space-planning and the structure that encloses space. Structure itself, employing wood, steel, reinforced concrete, glass, and many other materials, is the means by which space-planning and desired aesthetic effect are realized in forms which yield security and comfort.

In training there is some inclination to consider the difference in temperament that may occur among architectural students. Certain men with a keen aesthetic sense are natural space-planners; others with a bent for mathematics and science are at home in structural design. To allow for this variation in talent, several schools offer the student a choice as to whether he will major in space-planning or in construction. This range of interest is readily accommodated within the broad field and inclusive requirements of modern architecture.

The curricula of recognized schools of architecture vary in length from four to five years for the bachelor's degree, and certain schools feature graduate work leading to the master's degree. Part of this difference in time required may depend on the amount of professional training, but it is more likely to vary according to the importance given to general education.

Inclusion of the requirement of some general college education reflects a conviction that the architect must be prepared to take an active and intelligent part in the affairs of the world today. From this viewpoint history, the social and economic organization of society, and modern science are important. There is an increasing belief that at least a measure of general college education should parallel or precede the technical training, and that as a result the analysis and solution even of design projects in the architectural school itself will be more sound and more broadly creative.

Several architectural schools give considerable attention to office practice and business methods and include the field of specification writing, whereas other educators feel that it is not the function of the school to attempt what can better be learned through actual experience in the office or on the job. Probably something of the office viewpoint can profitably be inculcated during student days, so as to ease the transition from college instruction to office practice.

The schools, individually and as a group through the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, endeavor to provide the initial training which, after college, will be applied and continued in the early years of office experience. Even the mature practitioner continues his education as a matter of course, through keeping abreast of new problems, so long as he follows the practice of architecture.



## The Roof Is All-Important

Emil Lorch, F.A.I.A., believes this discourse on roofs to be of significance in the design of buildings.—Ed.

Ruskin has a fine passage on roofs in his "Lectures on Architecture and Painting," . . .

"I am sure that all of you must readily acknowledge the charm which is imparted to any landscape by the presence of cottages; and you must over and over again have paused at the wicket-gate of some cottage garden, delighted by the simple beauty of the honeysuckle porch and latticed window. Has it ever occurred to you to ask the question, what effect the cottage would have upon your feelings if it had no roof? no visible roof, I mean;—if instead of the thatched slope, in which the little upper windows are buried deep, as in a nest of straw—or the rough shelter of its mountain shales—or warm colouring of russet tiles—there were nothing but a flat leaden top to it, making it look like a large packing-case with windows in it? I don't think the rarity of such a sight would make you feel it to be beautiful; on the contrary, if you think over the matter you will find that you actually do owe, and ought to owe, a great part of your pleasure in all cottage scenery, and in all the inexhaustible imagery of literature which is founded upon it, to the conspicuousness of the cottage roof—to the subordination of the cottage itself to its covering, which leaves, in nine cases out of ten, really more roof than anything else. It is, indeed, not so much the white-washed walls, nor the flowery garden, nor the rude fragments of stones set for steps at the door, nor any other picturesqueness of the building which interests you, so much as the grey bank of its heavy eaves, deep-cushioned with green moss and golden stonecrop. And there is a profound, yet evident, reason for this feeling. The very soul of the cottage—the essence and meaning of it—are in its roof; it is that, mainly, wherein consists its shelter; that, wherein it differs most completely from a cleft in rocks or bower in woods. . . . Consider the difference, in sound, of the expressions *beneath my roof* and *within my walls*,—consider whether you would be best sheltered, in a shed, with a stout roof sustained on corner posts, or in an inclosure of four walls without a roof at all,—and you will quickly see how important a part of the cottage the roof must always be to the mind as well as to the eye, and how, from seeing it, the greatest part of our pleasure must continually arise . . ."

The English people, again, have a feeling inborn that confirms the views expressed by Ruskin, for they never stop in the streets to admire a tall house whose coverlid cannot be seen; nor do they ever praise any public building which, like the British Museum, brings into our cold and rainy climate the hidden roof and the porticoed architecture that belong to a land where the sun rules in a genial manner. When there is a good roof, plain for everybody to see, evident provision has been made for the many wet days; but when the roof is hidden from sight, an English house looks dismal and discouraging, like a person defying the rain or snow without an umbrella.—From "Old England, Her Story Mirrored in Her Scenes." Text by W. Shaw Sparrow, pictures by James Orrock, R. I. (New York: James Potts, 1908).

## C. W. Palmer Is Back

C. William Palmer, A.I.A., past president of the Detroit Chapter, A.I.A., and of the Michigan Society of Architects, has returned to civilian life, and his home at 1039 Seminole Ave., Detroit. Bill was a lieutenant commander in the Seabees, and was lately in the Pacific Theatre of War. His wife, Nina went to California to meet him, bringing back news of architects on the way. She visited with Joe Bernard, of New Orleans, and with the Kenneth Bells at Tucson, Ariz. Bill's many friends will be pleased to know that he is back in circulation again, and things architectural should take on new life.

## Walter Thulin Returns

Walter Thulin, A.I.A. has received his discharge from the Navy, as lieutenant commander and is back at his former connection, the Celorex Corporation, 735 Penobscot Building, Detroit. Walter, a graduate of the University of Michigan in 1927, is architectural representative for the Celorex Co.

## Municipal Construction

By Don C. Weeks, Director  
Michigan Planning Commission

The primary objective of the \$5,000,000 appropriated by the 1944 special session of the legislature to pay 50% of the cost of planning local public works was to stimulate the preparation of completed plans should widespread unemployment develop. The amount of construction which can be under way at any one time is dependent on completed plans, finances, materials, equipment and labor. The state's planning aid program has accomplished its primary objective of providing the first of these items completed plans.

With few exceptions local units of government in Michigan have a sufficient volume of completed plans to provide a construction program able for a few months to serve the function of public works in meeting any foreseeable unemployment, provided that finances, materials and construction equipment were available. This has been accomplished by public works

officials despite the shortage of the professional and skilled personnel needed to draw plans reported by practically all participating units of government. In addition to projects for which completed plans are ready, preliminary planning for their total program has largely been completed by local units of government. In other words, local officials are pretty well agreed on what projects should be constructed and contracts for plans have been let for many of them.

The total construction program submitted to the Planning Commission in the \$4,000,000 program by cities, villages, townships, school districts, and counties, but not including county road commissions, consists of 1,839 projects with a total construction cost of \$414,482,175. Grants of \$3,468,513 have been approved for projects with a construction cost of approximately \$300,000,000. A total of \$331,486 remains to be allocated and there is an additional \$200,000 which is being held in a state pool for distribution where most needed. Requests exceed the amount available by about \$2,500,000.

Completed plans in the \$5,000,000 program have been submitted to the Buildings and Construction Division of the State Administrative Board for construction totaling \$11,474,895. An additional \$13,771,460 of sewer, street and water project plans are complete under the partial payment plan.

Monthly progress reports from local units of government indicate that in addition to completed plans thus far submitted for reimbursement there are approximately \$20,000,000 of construction plans completed, which represent chiefly segments, of large street, sewer, water, and drainage projects.

The City of Detroit reports plans for \$18,028,000 of construction not included in the state's planning aid program. Incom-

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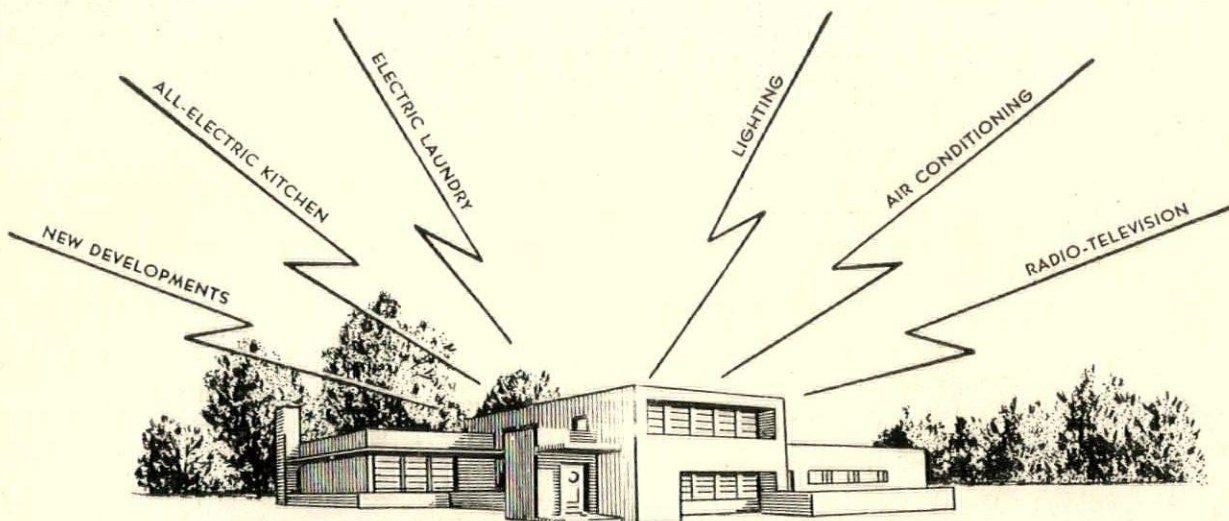
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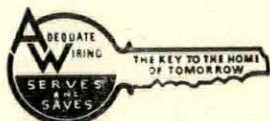
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